



Yom Huledet Sameach

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

In answer to the question, what is a Jewish birthday? Chabad.org says: "Your birthday commemorates the day on which G-d said to you: 'You, as an individual, are unique and irreplaceable. No person alive, no person who has ever lived, and no person who shall ever live, can fulfill the specific role in My creation I have entrusted to you...'"

That is a powerful message. As a child, your birthday brings certain privileges such as a party, presents, a special dinner, a special outing; every family has their own traditions.

But as an adult, we often move away from making the day as special. Celebrations don't always occur on the specific day and some people don't even like to celebrate as they might get hung up on the number.

Then there is the inevitable goal of accountability.

"I don't want to be that old." "I didn't accomplish (fill in the blank) like I had planned."

Well, this Monday at sundown, I will celebrate my 54th Hebrew birthday (the 5th of Sivan, the day before Shavuot). According to Aish.com, your birthday is a time to:

"Give Blessings to Others: Jewish tradition teaches that on special days when we can access a higher level of holiness, we should use our elevated state of mind to pray for others. For instance, it's common for Jewish brides and grooms to pray for other people on their wedding day. Jewish birthdays also offer a chance to reach out and think and pray for other people.

You can give people blessings for health, success, help in finding a spouse, or any other need. Spending some time on your special day thinking of others and praying on their behalf is a powerful way to use your birthday for good, and can elevate your day, drawing you closer to family and friends, and to the Divine."

So on my Hebrew birthday, my blessings for you: May you be blessed with health, success, long life, prosperity, friendship and peace. May Israel be successful in her endeavors for the country, her citizens and bring the hostages home safely! May you have the strength and courage to help others. And may you always find a reason to smile.

Shabbat Shalom.